

REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested for claims 1-44 and 46-65.

The Examiner indicated that claims 16-19, 37, 39, 42-43, 53, 56, and 63-64 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Because the claims from which those claims depend are submitted to be allowable, the applicant is not presently rewriting those claims in independent form.

Claim 45 was objected to as being a substantial duplicate of claim 41. Claim 45 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 15, 46, 59, and 62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,677,673 to *Shapiro*. Claim 15, from which all of the rejected claims depend, defines a powder molding apparatus, comprising a mold comprising a die having a powder molding space, and upper and lower punch units, a mold transporting mechanism for transporting said mold between at least a powder supplying stage, a compressing molding stage, and a molded article extracting stage, a compression driving mechanism for performing compression molding by driving said upper and lower punch units independently in said compressing molding stage, and linking means for detachably linking at least one of said upper and lower punch units to said compression driving mechanism, by moving in a direction orthogonal to the compression driving direction of said upper and lower punch units.

Shapiro does not disclose or suggest the features or combination of features recited in claim 15. The Official Action indicates that the anvil 144 is considered to correspond to the upper punching unit. However, an anvil clearly is not a punching unit.

The cam structure 54 is alleged to correspond to a compression driving mechanism, and the die means 52, or the punch 114, is alleged to correspond to the lower punching unit. The cam follower 152 and spring 139 are alleged correspond to linking means for linking the punch units to the compression driving means. It is respectfully submitted that *Shapiro* does not include structure corresponding to linking means for detachably linking at least one of said upper and lower punch units to said compression driving mechanism, by moving in a direction orthogonal to the compression driving direction of said upper and lower punch units. In the event that the Examiner continues to maintain that this structure is present in *Shapiro*, the Examiner is requested to explain in greater detail how the disclosure of *Shapiro* is alleged to correspond to the claim features.

In view of the differences between claim 15 and *Shapiro*, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and the claims dependent therefrom, including claims 46, 59, and 62, are not anticipated by and define patentably over *Shapiro*.

Claims 15 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,789,323 to *Hudson*. *Hudson* is understood to disclose that a dial feeder 13 rotates relative to a ram 12 and a punch 18 and relative to an aperture 19 and collar 21 in a table 11. It is not seen how *Hudson* is considered to disclose the features or combination of features of claim 15 such as a mold transporting mechanism for transporting

said mold between at least a powder supplying stage, a compressing molding stage, and a molded article extracting stage, a compression driving mechanism for performing compression molding by driving said upper and lower punch units independently in said compressing molding stage.

In view of the differences between claim 15 and *Hudson*, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and the claims dependent therefrom, including claim 35, are not anticipated by and define patentably over *Hudson*.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,686,118 to *Kurata*. In *Kurata*, the punch 15, the plate 11, and the punch 31 are all fixed relative to a frame 1b, while the pressure applying members 22 and 37 move with the shaft 4. It is not seen how *Kurata* is considered to disclose the features or combination of features of claim 15 such as a mold transporting mechanism for transporting said mold between at least a powder supplying stage, a compressing molding stage, and a molded article extracting stage, a compression driving mechanism for performing compression molding by driving said upper and lower punch units independently in said compressing molding stage.

In view of the differences between claim 15 and *Hudson*, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and the claims dependent therefrom, including claim 35, are not anticipated by and define patentably over *Kurata*.

Claims 36, 41, 44-52, 54-55, and 57-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shapiro* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,004,120 to *Matsubara et al.*

Claim 60 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shapiro* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,037,287 to *Hirai*. Claim 61 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shapiro*. All of the rejected claims depend from claim 15, which is submitted to define patentably over *Shapiro* for at least the reasons discussed above. Therefore, the claims dependent from claim 15 define patentably over *Shapiro* for at least the same reasons as claim 15. The secondary references, *Matsubara et al.* and *Hirai*, do not cure the defects of *Shapiro* and, therefore claim 15 and the claims dependent therefrom are submitted to define patentably over the cited references for at least the reasons discussed above.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims, claims 1-44 and 46-65, are in condition for allowance. Allowance is cordially urged.

If the Examiner should be of the opinion that a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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